

OFFICE OF INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY

FROM TRANSFORMATION TO MODERNIZATION

2017 YEAR IN REVIEW



VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Office of Information and Technology



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OUR PATH FORWARD



SCOTT R. BLACKBURN

Mr. Blackburn was appointed Executive in Charge of the Department of Veterans Affairs' Office of Information and Technology by Secretary Shulkin in October 2017.

Mr. Blackburn joined VA in November 2014, serving as Senior Advisor to the Secretary on Transformation, Interim Executive Director of the MyVA Task Force, and Interim Deputy Secretary.

Prior to VA, Mr. Blackburn was a consultant at McKinsey & Company, where he helped transform cultures of Fortune 500 companies. He was named partner in 2011.

Mr. Blackburn hails from a family with a strong tradition of military service. All four of his siblings are Veterans, and he served in the Army from 1999 to 2003 as an Armor and Signal Corps officer. Mr. Blackburn is a Veteran of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Anaconda in Afghanistan.

Medically discharged after a non-combat-related back injury in Kuwait, Mr. Blackburn is a beneficiary of VA's Vocational Rehabilitation Program that facilitated a smooth transition from uniform to university. In 2005, Mr. Blackburn graduated from Harvard Business School.

EMBRACING MODERNIZATION

As a Veteran and a public servant, I care deeply about VA—and not just because I work here. I receive my own health care and benefits from VA, and receiving care at VA is a choice I am proud of. I believe in our mission, and I believe in making VA the best choice for all Veterans. I understand the issues Veterans face, and I see how the Office of Information and Technology (OIT) impacts the care and benefits Veterans receive every day.

In 2016, I experienced the beginning of OIT's transformation and the impact it could have on Veteran care. I shattered my forearm in a biking accident and had to have emergency surgery. Before I could undergo the operation, I needed an appointment with my primary care team—the Orange Team at the Washington D.C. VA Medical Center—to sign off on the surgery.

I called to schedule an appointment and was told there were no openings until the following week, but I urgently needed an appointment in the next 48 hours. The scheduler made several phone calls, and, after I sent a secure message through [MyHealtheVet](#) to my primary care physician at 6:00 that evening, I had an appointment for 8:00 the next morning.

My first thought was, "Wow! Same-day access has arrived at the D.C. VAMC." In truth, I was wrong. I was able to get an appointment because the scheduler and my primary care physician jumped through hoops to make it happen.

...we have put processes in place to make same-day care a reality.

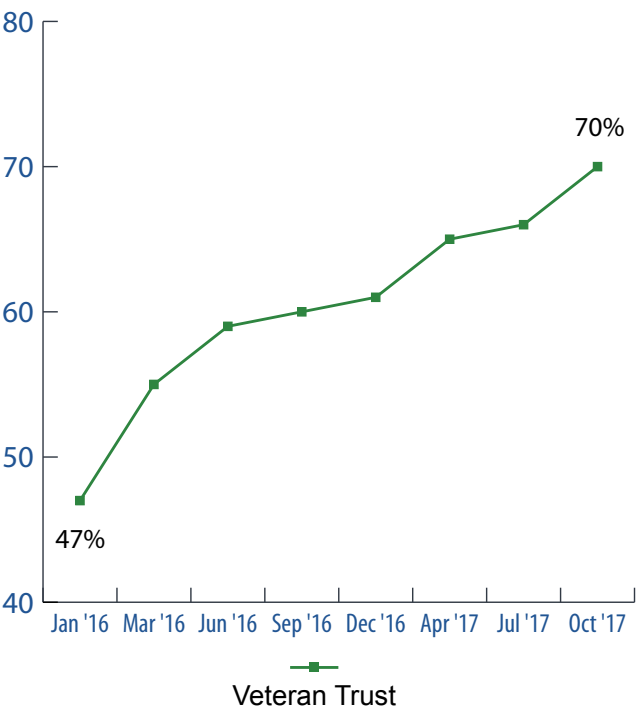
What if I hadn't pushed for an appointment? Most Veterans would hear that nothing was available and hang up. What if the scheduler had been too busy to make additional calls? We should not put our clinicians in a position where they must work around the system instead of with it. They should not have to jump through hoops so that Veterans get the care they need.

Since then, we have put processes in place to make same-day care a reality. We created multiple operational

efficiencies in community care through technology, like the Virtru Pro secure file exchange system. This allows us to share a Veteran's health information with the private sector, and clinicians tell us that it is saving lives. We improved scheduling through the Veteran Appointment Request app, which allows Veterans to schedule primary care and mental health appointments on their mobile phones.

These changes now make it easier for me to get an appointment at VA and in the community than it is for my wife to get an appointment with her primary care physician in the private sector. I haven't been the only one to benefit. Other Veterans are feeling the difference, too. We [increased Veteran trust in VA from 47 percent to 70 percent](#) in just two years, and while that is nowhere near good enough, we are moving in the right direction.

INCREASED VETERAN TRUST



We should not put our clinicians in a position where they must work around the system instead of with it.

I have been at VA for three years. First, I led the MyVA transformation, then I was Interim Deputy Secretary, and now I am the Executive in Charge for VA's Office of Information and Technology. I come from the mission side; I know VA, I know people, and I know transformation.

OIT's transformation is about putting the right people to the right functions to deliver the technology that best supports VA in providing the care, benefits, and services that Veterans have earned. The organizational changes are in place. OIT has a solid structure and operates as an agile and efficient information technology (IT) organization. But we are not done.

VA Secretary Dr. David Shulkin is committed to modernizing VA and making it a world-class service provider and the top customer service agency in the Federal Government. That commitment puts information technology at the core of VA's modernization success.

I also know modernizing an agency of our size and geographic breadth is no easy task—but it is not a task that is out of our reach.

During my time as Executive in Charge of OIT, I have had the opportunity to collaborate with and learn from a variety of colleagues. This team comprises smart, hardworking people who are dedicated to upholding VA's mission and working with our business partners to create the best experience for all Veterans. As we advance Secretary Shulkin's modernization strategy, we will create a more efficient technological backbone, enabling our colleagues across VA to provide exemplary service to Veterans.

The most important thing one can do as a leader is to give people something worth following, worth joining. A leader must have the guts to stand alone. A leader must be easy to

follow. That is what creates a movement, and movements continue long after the leaders who created them are gone.

Transforming OIT and modernizing IT is a movement. We need everyone to look around, recognize that change is happening, embrace it, and join us. We will continue to drive rapid change by setting bold goals. If we set bold goals and miss, we'll make much more progress than we would by setting smaller goals and exceeding them.

Our transformation touches every aspect of our work, and it has changed the way we serve Veterans for the better. I know we will continue to make leaps in progress if we work as a team, remain transparent and accountable, and support Secretary Shulkin's modernization goals.

I encourage you all to join our movement and look forward to seeing just how far VA can go in 2018.

Scott Blackburn

Executive in Charge

Office of Information and Technology

Department of Veterans Affairs

HARD WORK IS PAYING OFF



Scan the Quick Response (QR) code or go to <https://go.usa.gov/xnwPJ> to learn more about how the contributions of OIT have led to better care for Veterans.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE

Scott Blackburn recognizes employees at VA during Public Service Recognition Week.



\$4.5B BUDGET

6000+ APPROVED TOOLS IN TECHNICAL REFERENCE MODEL **130+ INSTANCES OF VISTA**

59% VETERANS 8,300 EMPLOYEES
8,000 CONTRACTORS

1,350+ ACTIVE CONTRACTS TO DATE

200 DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

194 PROJECTS SHARED WITH OPEN SOURCE COMMUNITY SINCE JANUARY 2016

WHAT IS OIT?

8,841,942 TROUBLE TICKETS SINCE JANUARY 2016

352 DATA CENTERS 875 APPLICATIONS

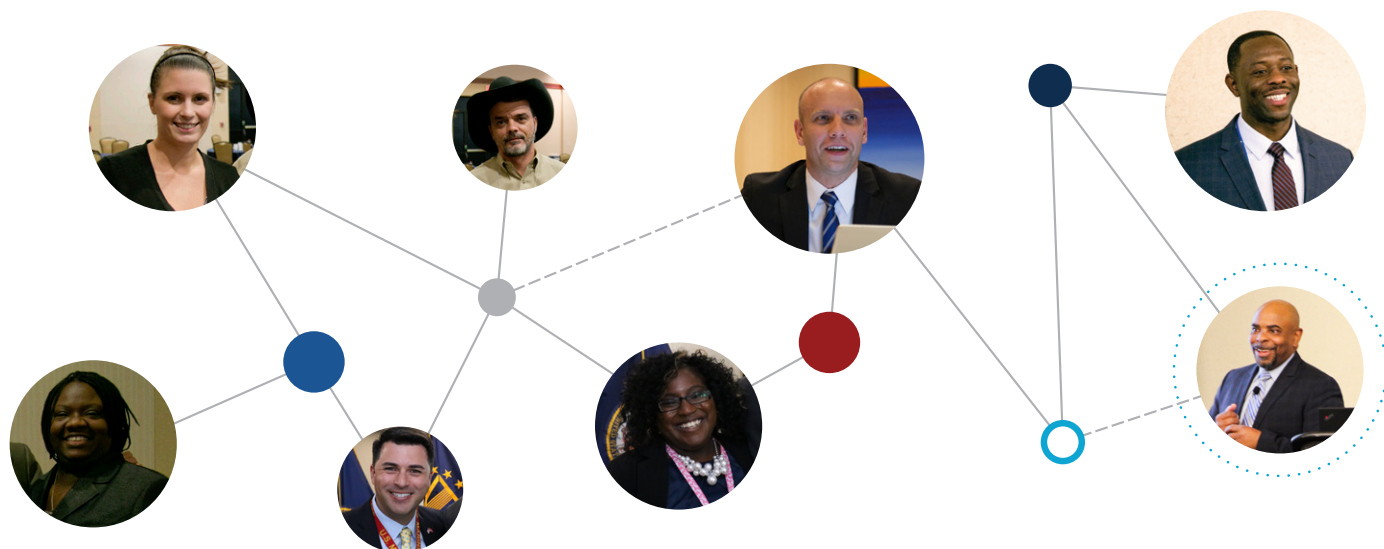
8 FUNCTIONAL DOMAINS OF CYBERSECURITY

5.1 BILLION MALWARE ATTEMPTS BLOCKED SINCE JANUARY 2016

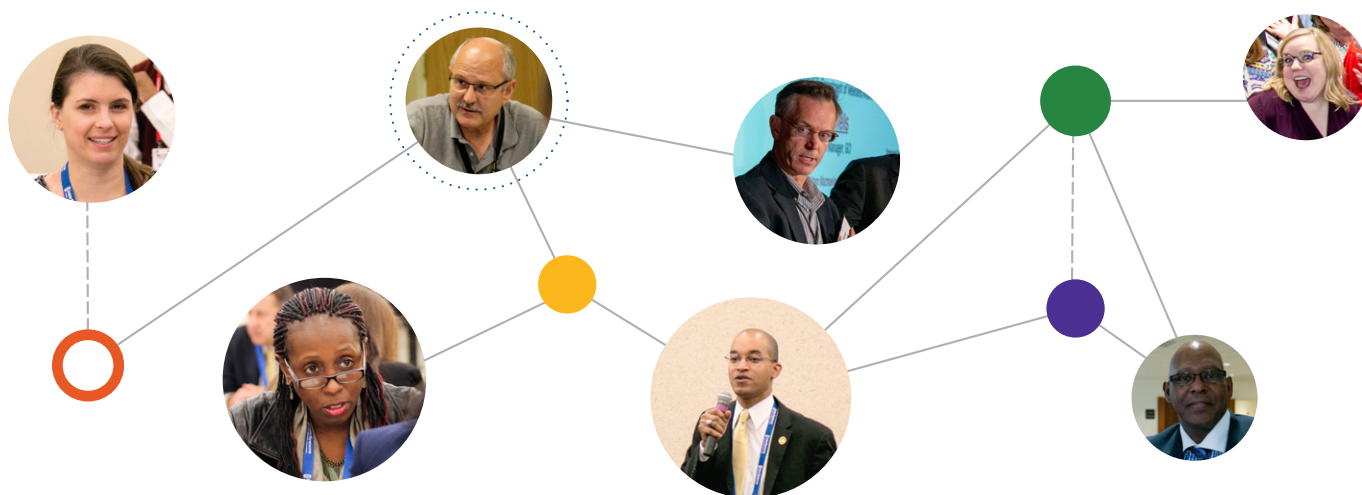
353+ MILLION DOCUMENTS AND 2.3 BILLION IMAGES IN VBMS

1,907 TOTAL SWAT INCIDENTS SINCE JANUARY 2016

406 INFORMATION SECURITY OFFICERS



WHO IS OIT?





PART ONE

TRANSFORMATION

In July 2015, we began a [transformation](#).

A self-assessment of our current state—which drew from employee interviews, external reviews, and meetings with oversight bodies—revealed significant internal challenges. It presented an opportunity to reimagine our place at VA, to envision an IT organization that fundamentally changes the way our Veterans interact with VA and to enable our business partners to provide the industry-leading access, care, benefits, and services our Veterans have earned.

We needed to harness the momentum the VA-wide [MyVA](#) transformation offered. We needed to become the world-class technology organization that our partners required and our Veterans deserved. We needed to embrace change and adopt “in the best interest of the Veteran” as more than just an email signature. Beginning in 2016, we refocused not only on why we served, but how. Over the course of that year, [we changed the way OIT operates](#).

We transformed our structure and organization to better align with industry best practices, allowing us to support our business partners across VA in serving Veterans.

We streamlined our service delivery through the establishment of Information Technology Operations and Services (ITOPS). We improved our response and compliance with federal regulations, recommendations, and audits by

FROM TRANSFORMATION TO MODERNIZATION



Scan the QR code or go to <https://go.usa.gov/xnwPu> to learn more about OIT's path to modernization.

establishing the Quality, Privacy, and Risk (QPR) division. Our Office of Information Security (OIS) also refined our cybersecurity strategy, meeting National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) standards to better protect government resources and Veteran information.

Our new Strategic Sourcing function leveraged the best of both our VA staff's expertise and the innovation of our external partners to deliver the best solutions to our Veterans. It improved our speed to market, ensured our compliance with IT acquisition legislation, and fostered the most responsible allocation of taxpayer resources.

We established portfolios to build technology aligned to our business partners' needs. Each portfolio now has an IT account manager who collaborates with the VA business partner to understand their challenges and develop effective IT solutions. We also established the Enterprise Program Management Office (EPMO) as a control tower for IT development that provides an enterprise-wide view of all ongoing projects within the portfolios, manages

TRANSFORMING OUR ORGANIZATION

OIT established new functions that put us on the path toward achieving our three goals.



IT Operations
and Services



Quality, Privacy,
and Risk



Strategic
Sourcing



Account
Management Office



Enterprise Program
Management Office



Digital
Services

cyber risks, and ties project performance to outcomes that directly improve the Veteran experience.

As Veterans' needs evolve, VA must shift to meet them—and even anticipate them. We established a Digital Services (DSVA) team at VA to do just that. In the past year, DSVA spent 240 hours speaking directly to Veterans to understand their needs and how they want to interact with VA, so we can develop the products and services they will want to use.

Through our transformation and clearer understanding of the evolving needs of our Veterans, we worked seamlessly with our business partners across the Department to determine the best way to address challenges and deploy technological solutions that enable our VA colleagues to provide the care, benefits, and services our Veterans have earned.

We did more than just restructure. We set new goals and imagined a new approach.



We defined four OIT core values that underpin how we pursue rapid success—core values we aspire to embody—every day, in every project, for every Veteran.

- » **TRANSPARENCY:** We share our successes and our failures. We tell it like it is instead of qualifying or glossing over the truth.
- » **ACCOUNTABILITY:** We own the issues within our environment and our organization, and we hold ourselves accountable to take steps to improve them while transparently sharing our progress along the way.

- » **INNOVATION:** We ask, “Why not?” and “What if?” We look at our environment and our Veterans’ needs and find opportunities to change things for the better.
- » **TEAMWORK:** We work for the success of the team, not the glory of the moment. We focus on outcomes. We ask ourselves, “Is this in the best interest of the Veteran?”



OIT's core values underpin our three strategic goals:

- » Stabilize and streamline core processes and platforms
- » Eliminate material weaknesses
- » Institutionalize new capabilities that drive improved outcomes

These three goals were born from outcomes already mandated, those in progress, those we knew we needed, and those required to transform into a cutting-edge technology organization.

If 2016 was a year of transformation, then 2017 was a year of stabilization. We focused on cementing what we achieved through transformation, plotting a path toward modernization, and improving the ways we deliver the care, benefits, and services our Veterans depend on. Just as we relied on our core values and our three strategic goals as a roadmap during our initial transformation, they framed our success in 2017 and they continue to guide our plans for future modernization.

LIVING OUR CORE VALUES

Susan McHugh-Polley, Deputy Assistant Secretary, IT Operations and Services, and former Acting Chief Information Officer and Assistant Secretary for the Office of Information and Technology Rob Thomas answer questions from OIT employees a during a Town Hall event in Phoenix.





PART TWO

OIT MODERNIZATION

- » Stabilizing and Streamlining Our Core Processes and Platforms
- » Eliminating Our Material Weaknesses
- » Institutionalizing New Capabilities That Drive Improved Outcomes

STABILIZING AND STREAMLINING OUR CORE PROCESSES AND PLATFORMS

IT core processes and platforms form the backbone of VA.

The work we do behind the scenes supports critical functions across the Department and ensures smooth interactions between systems for a better Veteran experience. In 2017, we took a hard look at improving our core processes. From our help desk support to financial management, from providing laptops to employees to consolidating data centers, and from decreasing our physical building footprint to expanding our cloud footprint, we've made tremendous progress.

Enterprise Service Desk

For our employees to successfully serve our Veterans, they need VA's technology to work. While we strive to set them up for immediate success, sometimes technology fails and our employees need support. When that happens, we want to quickly and seamlessly resolve the issue and get our employees back to work. In 2017, we strove to make receiving IT support significantly easier.

Many VA employees found the National Service Desk confusing; multiple layers and complicated options made navigating our IT help desk a headache. VA made its voice heard, and we listened.

In May 2017, we renamed this service the Enterprise Service Desk (ESD) and launched an enhanced and streamlined ESD menu—the Automated Attendant. This automated menu presents users with intuitive options that align to the most frequent requests for IT support, getting callers to a specialized agent faster.

The Automated Attendant feature also made it easier for agents to resolve issues during the first conversation and, if needed, escalate the issue directly to the appropriate subject matter expert for resolution. Our goal is to reach 65 percent first-call resolution. We are achieving efficiency by standardizing our processes to provide the best IT support in the shortest amount of time, keeping VA employees connected to the systems they need to provide unmatched service to our nation's Veterans.

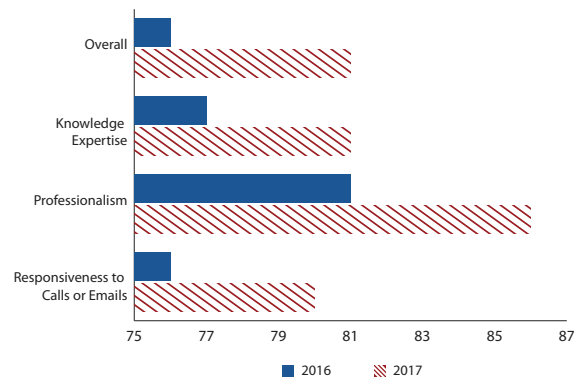


Our customers noticed.

The 2017 OIT Customer Satisfaction Survey showed that ESD improved its American Customer Satisfaction Index score by five points—from 76 to 81—in just 1 year.

2017 OIT CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY

The biggest improvement in customer satisfaction came from support personnel’s professionalism (86, a five-point improvement from 2016), agent knowledge and expertise (81, a four-point improvement from 2016), and ESD’s timely response to calls or emails (80, a four-point improvement from 2016).



Comparison	2016	2017
Overall	76	81
Knowledge Expertise	77	81
Professionalism	81	86
Responsiveness to Calls or Emails	76	80

White House VA Hotline

In addition to streamlining and improving service to those experiencing technical difficulties within VA, we also needed to improve the experiences of our Veterans when they called VA for assistance. VA did an inventory of the number of contact centers within the organization, and the numbers were staggering; we had more than 205 individual contact centers with 1,000 different phone numbers.

In support of a White House priority, OIT partnered with the Veterans Experience Office to establish a dedicated, comprehensive hotline to field requests for information, support services, and complaints from Veterans. The White House VA Hotline launched a pilot program on June 1, 2017 that became fully operational, staffed by live agents 24-hours-a-day, 365-days-a-year, in October 2017. This hotline is the first non-clinical, non-emergency, around-the-clock Veteran call center.

VA and the White House created the hotline to modernize, improve, and simplify the way Veterans contact VA. The hotline is staffed by more than 60 agents with extensive training in VA programs and services. In response to feedback that Veterans preferred to speak to agents who could relate to their experiences, *approximately 90 percent of hotline agents are Veterans or employees who have a Veteran family member.*



SUPPORTING VETERANS 24/7/365



Scan the QR code or go to <https://go.usa.gov/xnwEq> code to learn more about how IT serves Veterans.

In the future, Veterans will be able to communicate with the hotline via chat, text, email, fax, and video. VA will document the hotline responses, referrals, and resolutions with tracking software to regularly update and train agents based on current trends and Veteran needs. VA will use that data to respond to systemic inefficiencies and empower employees to quickly resolve Veteran concerns.

Legacy Systems

The saying “change is the only constant” is especially true in information technology. Over the years, VA has developed or implemented a host of systems designed to meet the needs of VA employees and the Veterans they serve. As time passes, demands change and technology evolves.



In 2017, VA committed to re-examining our legacy IT systems, with an eye toward transitioning to modern systems with lower maintenance costs. Around 60 percent of OIT’s budget went to sustaining our aging infrastructure and applications, which hampered our ability to invest in new technology solutions. We needed to change this.

VA now plans to move critical functions from outdated and unsustainable platforms to more modern systems that operate at lower maintenance costs. We expect this change to save millions of dollars that can be reinvested in projects that directly enhance services for all Veterans. A significant part of this reinvestment focuses on cloud and IT infrastructure improvements. Moving these functions to new platforms requires careful, thoughtful planning, and we accomplished much of that necessary planning in 2017.

To begin, we established a legacy system modernization and decommissioning strategy and roadmap by assessing our current systems and deciding if, how, and when each will be modernized, retired, or replaced. We then developed a retirement planning and execution process for future legacy systems, which leverages cloud and software-as-a-service (SaaS) options and aligns to our Veteran-focused Integration Process (VIP), Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) principles, and OIT governance framework.

By reducing maintenance costs, re-investing in new technology, and seeking out those technology solutions that directly improve the Veteran experience, we’re creating a more modern, sustainable technology footprint.



EVALUATED 376 Data Centers



Data Center Consolidation

In addition to maintaining hundreds of legacy systems, VA maintains hundreds of large data centers all over the country. Many of these data centers are inefficient, costly, and non-compliant with the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) Data Center Optimization Initiative (DCOI) memorandum or the Federal Information Technology Acquisition Reform Act (FITARA).

At the start of 2017, we developed a plan to reduce inefficient data center infrastructure, optimize existing facilities, improve security posture, achieve cost savings, and transition to more efficient infrastructure.

In less than a year, we evaluated 376 nationwide data centers for potential consolidation and closed 24 of them, while laying the foundation to close 68 more in 2018. We

are on track to close a total of 92 data centers by the end of fiscal year 2018. Not only do our consolidation efforts result in cost savings, but they also allow VA employees to spend less time managing the infrastructure and more time on customer-focused activities that better serve Veterans.

We organized our data centers into four categories:

- » **Core Data Centers:** The highest-tiered data centers
- » **Campus Support Centers:** Data centers located at VA medical centers
- » **Mission Support Centers:** Specialized mission centers, such as the Consolidated Mail Outpatient Pharmacies Center
- » **Network Support Centers:** Centers primarily located at regional Veteran Benefits Administration and Office of Information and Technology offices

Strategic Sourcing

In 2016, OIT developed a strategic sourcing function to provide more accountable IT product and service procurement for VA and to help achieve compliance with FITARA, resulting from a call to action from Congress to deliver the latest technology at the best value. In 2017, we launched our strategic sourcing function by examining OIT practices that improve speed to market, improve compliance and quality for IT solutions, provide VA with access to industry innovation, and empower employees to deliver the best solution at the best value.

We worked with VA's Office of Acquisition, Logistics, and Construction (OALC) to obtain [Source Selection Authority](#) (SSA) delegation. This authority centralized IT award responsibility and accountability so that OIT could execute faster IT acquisitions and hold suppliers accountable, enhancing outcomes and delivering value. We developed a corresponding OIT SSA implementation plan that defined and published associated roles, responsibilities, activities, standards, tools, and a glossary in the OIT Process Asset Library.

...the best solution at the best value.

Moving forward, we will continue to reinforce and enhance the Strategic Sourcing division and its capabilities, aligning the right staff to implement a successful strategic sourcing program. These improvements will help OIT provide, acquire, and manage the tools and services we need to support our business partners in delivering innovative, timely solutions that improve the Veteran experience.

For the third consecutive rating period, VA received a B+ grade from the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform FITARA scorecard. VA is the largest and most complex agency to receive this high a rating. As we continue to enhance the Strategic Sourcing division and make progress toward data center consolidation, we're focused on ensuring VA remains a government leader in accountability and FITARA compliance.

HONOR ROLL

VA received a B+ grade from the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform FITARA scorecard. VA is the largest and most complex agency to receive this high a rating. By comparison, 14 agencies received a C grade, 3 received a D grade, and 2 received an F grade.



Managing Data

OIT is responsible for a vast amount of Veteran data. We manage and maintain hundreds of systems that use that data to serve Veterans, ensuring that they receive the care, benefits, and services they have earned. Currently, the systems do not always share data, which puts the onus on the Veteran to make sure they update their information in multiple systems, complicating what should be a simple interaction with VA.

We imagine a different Veteran experience—one in which we consolidate and leverage our vast data stores to predict Veteran and employee needs, improve data-

based decision making, simplify customer interaction with VA platforms, and increase public access to valuable government information.

We envision a secure, scalable, and reliable data management infrastructure for moving information across the entire VA network. To get there, we've created a concept for a "data turnpike" across VA that enforces rules for data flow and usage, allowing for a comprehensive view of our data so it can be used more effectively. This effort will support interoperability and emerging business needs, unleash the power of data to better serve our Veterans, and ultimately return ownership of that data to the Veteran.

Data Turnpike

The "data turnpike" enforces rules for data flow and usage across VA.

- » **Turnpike Governance:** establishes common, shared, and organizational rules of the road
- » **Cybersecurity Structure:** keeps in/outgoing data safe
- » **Priority Data:** access to critical data is given priority



VA Enterprise Cloud Strategy

MIGRATION/DEVELOPMENT

Migrate suitable systems into the enterprise cloud and build new cloud systems

FOUNDATION

Build managed, secure, agile, cost effective, foundational VA enterprise cloud

CLOUD EXPERTISE

Grow/recruit/contract for cloud-specific expertise

IDENTIFICATION

Identify systems that are suitable to be moved into the enterprise cloud

GOVERNANCE

Stand up, align, and execute cloud governance



Cloud

Decommissioning legacy systems, consolidating data centers, and evolving strategic sourcing created room in our budget to invest in innovative technology solutions. When the time came to identify alternative solutions to move critical functions previously captured in legacy systems, ensure data consolidation didn't impact our data stores, and be more responsive to our customers' needs, we looked to the cloud.

We began our move to the cloud by building the foundation and hiring an experienced cloud executive to drive our progress. We developed a strategy to understand the business requirements and developed an enterprise architecture. We assessed our systems and created a plan to migrate our applications to the cloud.

We now have more flexibility to innovate. Storing information in the cloud makes it widely available to developers and stakeholders, promoting increased collaboration. It also shortens the development cycle from weeks or months down to hours, allowing VA to dynamically scale applications up or down based on business needs.

To continue our success, we must modernize our network and ensure fast, easy, secure access to applications. We will retrain and redeploy staff to meet changing needs and shift from a capital-intensive model to managed services, developing cloud applications that are universal, not tied to one cloud vendor. The cloud is a more stable foundation for secure and flexible data storage and enables us to do more for Veterans faster and with fewer physical resources.

Implementing Cloud to Modernize VA

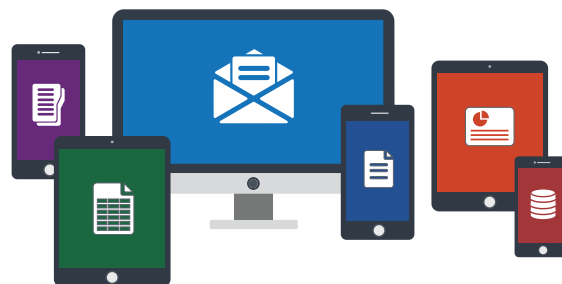
We are implementing cloud technology across the VA enterprise to better serve our employees as they work to improve the Veteran experience. Highlights of our 2017 cloud accomplishments include:



Office 365 ProPlus

Moving applications to the cloud facilitates collaboration and saves VA expenses on equipment, space, and operations. Upgrading to Office 365 ProPlus does all this while bringing VA the latest versions of productivity applications such as Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access, and Skype for Business. It also gives VA additional levels of security, greater ease in updating and deployment, and extra tools and features that will better enable IT technicians to deliver more efficient, reliable service, and to resolve performance issues.

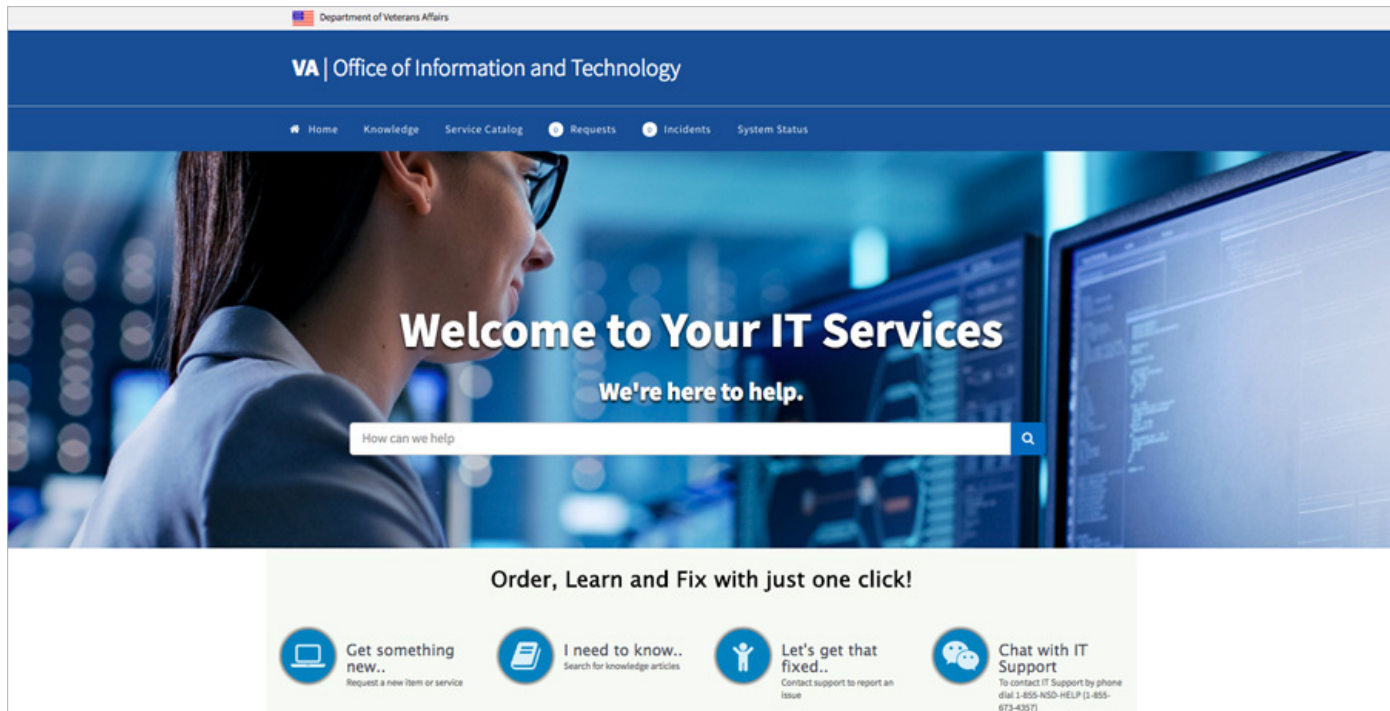
The project team has been working diligently through 2017 to upgrade VA users and mailboxes to Office 365 ProPlus. Approximately 70 percent of VA has migrated to Office 365 ProPlus, with remaining users on schedule to migrate to Office 365 ProPlus by the middle of 2018.



Email-as-a-Service

At VA, email in the cloud is often referred to as email-as-a-service. More than 240,000 VA mailboxes have moved to the cloud, providing employees with:

- » A larger mailbox with 100 gigabytes of storage
- » The ability to send and receive larger attachments
- » A more stable, reliable, and secure email system that delivers enhanced performance
- » Advanced viewing of shared calendars



ServiceNow (IT Service Management Tool)

In October 2017, VA purchased a cloud-based IT service management tool, ServiceNow, a comprehensive single platform that modernizes the way our customers access IT support in VA.

“SERVICENOW BRIDGES THE GAP BETWEEN OUR EXISTING IT CAPABILITIES AND OIT’S VISION TO DELIVER WORLD-CLASS TECHNICAL SUPPORT AND CUSTOMER SERVICE.”

- Jack Galvin, Executive Sponsor, ITSM Tool

When fully implemented, ServiceNow will enhance OIT employees’ ability to prioritize incidents, analyze issues, and capture service management metrics. It will also offer an advanced self-service portal through which users can submit requests, report issues, and talk to technicians via an online chat function.

This effort is a significant step forward in VA’s continuous drive to remain accountable, modernize IT, and improve utilization of resources. ServiceNow fulfills OIT’s strategic goals to stabilize and streamline core processes and institutionalize new capabilities that drive improved outcomes.

The next step is implementation. We expect ServiceNow to be operational in 2018, with the first wave of functionality to include incident management, service request management, knowledge management, and an interactive service portal.

182 CURRENT VA SYSTEMS IDENTIFIED FOR CONSIDERATION AND ANALYSIS DURING THE IFAMS IMPLEMENTATION

\$4.11 BILLION MANUAL ACCOUNTING ADJUSTMENTS

96.9% CURRENT APPLICATIONS AVAILABILITY

30-YEAR OUTDATED LEGACY FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

MISCELLANEOUS OBLIGATIONS MATCHING CONTRACTS TO OBLIGATIONS

WHAT IS FMBT?

1460 COMPLETED PROGRAM MANAGEMENT TASKS

IMPLEMENTED 100+ CUSTOMERS ON CGI MOMENTUM 83 SYSTEMS ANALYZED

REDUCE INTEREST PAYMENTS ON VENDOR INVOICES—\$350 PER \$1 MILLION OF OBLIGATIONS

Financial Management Business Transformation (FMBT)

VA has a clear and urgent need to address multiple legacy platforms used today in our finance and accounting mission-critical functions. OIT has selected a new, streamlined, cloud-based financial system solution to replace our 30-year-old Financial Management System (FMS). It will soon transition from this legacy financial management system to the new platform, the Integrated Financial and Acquisition Management System (iFAMS).

Making the transition to iFAMS requires the careful thought and planning of a new team within OIT's Financial Management Business Transformation program—the Special Program Office (SPO). The SPO's work includes

analyzing nearly 200 interfaces involved in VA's financial management data transmission and over 100 legacy systems to support the design of the new system and prepare for data migration and security requirements. The team works closely with the Business Process Reengineering team, reviewing each system and related interfaces to provide technical recommendations. By promoting operational efficiency and simplicity, this program supports Secretary Shulkin's priority of focusing resources and strengthening foundational services in VA.

This transition effort will increase the transparency, accuracy, timeliness, and reliability of financial information, improving our fiscal accountability to American taxpayers and streamlining care and services for our Veterans.

VA Integrated Enterprise Workflow Solution (VIEWS)

After an intense review of a failed 3-year attempt to deploy a separate Veterans Affairs Intranet Quorum (VAIQ) enterprise correspondence management system, we charted a path toward a solution that would facilitate enterprise caseload and case management—features the former, siloed VAIQ replacement attempt lacked. The new IT capability provides the Office of Congressional Legislative Affairs initial functionality and workflow case management. We're also replacing VAIQ with this new solution.

In June 2017, the VIEWS project team successfully deployed its first Veteran-focused integration process (VIP) release. This innovative product is the first step toward eliminating one-off disparate systems and integrating corporate processes into a unified cloud platform, reducing the IT footprint at VA. VIEWS uses a cloud-based platform that can be configured and scaled for other case management needs, such as the White House VA Hotline initiative.

WHAT IS VETERAN-FOCUSED INTEGRATION PROCESS?

VIP creates a more streamlined process for delivering IT solutions that prioritizes Veteran needs at the project, program, and portfolio levels. Using Agile principles, it:

- » Reduces the number of documents from 57 to 7
- » Simplifies 5 phases into 2 critical decision points
- » Consolidates multiple release processes into 1 integrated release
- » Cuts the delivery cycle from 6 months to 3 months



Implementing Cloud to Modernize VA



ELIMINATING OUR MATERIAL WEAKNESSES

Protecting Veteran data is a top VA priority, and effective cybersecurity practices are critical to our success.

VA not only successfully remediated our material weaknesses, we also took the lessons learned from that exercise to enhance our cybersecurity posture. VA aligned our policies and practices with industry guidelines, building a robust cybersecurity ecosystem that proactively assesses risk.

A New Approach to the OIG FISMA Audit

In 2015 and 2016, the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) Federal Information Security Modernization Act (FISMA) audit findings highlighted material weaknesses that threatened the security of Veteran data. In 2017, we changed the way we approached cybersecurity and established policies to protect VA systems and infrastructure and ensure VA's cyberspace ecosystem is resilient to threats.

We mapped the 2017 OIG findings to National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) security and privacy standards to identify the controls (countermeasures) that were commonly aligned to findings within the audit. This allows us to use the controls that require more attention

to prioritize future projects. In preparation for future audit cycles, we will develop detailed implementation guidance for high-risk controls, providing the field with the knowledge base they will need to successfully protect Veteran data.

As VA develops its control implementation guidance, we will incorporate it into the VA Risk Management Framework Knowledge Service as the single authoritative source of VA control policy and implementation guidance. Our approach to remediation will be better documented and we will have the tools we need to quickly remediate findings and work toward eliminating material weaknesses.

Enterprise Cybersecurity Strategy (ECSS)

In response to emerging data threats and the evolving cybersecurity landscape, OIT collaborated with stakeholders, subject matter experts, and contracting partners to update VA's Enterprise Cybersecurity Strategy (ECSS). With the establishment of the Enterprise Cybersecurity Strategy Program (ECSP), we are embarking on a change in mindset of how to manage cyber risks to prioritize cybersecurity projects and create an integrated, transparent program. The ECSS helps VA identify and articulate the requirements,

STRENGTHENING CYBERSECURITY

Rob Disko, Director, Cybersecurity Risk Management, discussing IT cybersecurity at the National Veterans Small Business Engagement.

5 CYBERSECURITY GOALS



standards, and opportunities for transformative cybersecurity improvements. The updated strategy refreshes VA's direction and objectives when it comes to assessing and managing threats to VA's cybersecurity.

The ECSS promotes collaboration and enables us to protect Veteran information from a broad spectrum of threats through the following five strategic cybersecurity goals:

- » **Data Protection:** Protecting Veteran information and VA data is our top priority. Ensuring the safety of their critical data allows us to build and maintain their trust.
- » **Threat Resilient Cyberspace Ecosystem:** Early detection of cyber threats and intrusions is critical to developing a resilient ecosystem. Responses to those present and future threats must be effective and timely.
- » **Protected Information Systems and Infrastructure:** Ensuring the safety of our cyber infrastructure is important. We can't do our jobs without secure IT systems, so we must make sure these systems are modern, efficient, and effective.

- » **Secure Operational Environment:** In an effective environment, our operations should be transparent, accountable, and seamless so we can continue to deliver the best service possible to our Veterans, their families, and our employees.
- » **Talented Cybersecurity and Privacy Workforce:** By recruiting, developing, and retaining a strong cybersecurity workforce, we'll have a united defense against future cyber threats.

Creating a Culture of Cybersecurity at VA

Over the summer, the Network Security Operations Center (NSOC) conducted routine phishing assessments in various organizations throughout VA. The results found that a staggering 40 percent of users clicked on a malicious link when presented with a fake phishing email. The message was clear: we urgently needed to educate staff about cybersecurity. Employees are the frontline of VA's defenses.

The results found that a staggering 40 percent of users clicked on a malicious link when presented with a fake phishing email.

We focused on educating our employees by leveraging blog posts, video messages, posters, and a cybersecurity toolkit, and we will continue to ingrain cybersecurity as part of the everyday culture and operations at VA. In October, VA observed National Cybersecurity Awareness Month by launching a monthly Office of Information Security (OIS) video series, featuring OIS experts discussing a broad range of topics from social media safety to preventing cybersecurity holes in web applications.



Risk Management Framework (RMF)

VA's RMF is another step forward in VA's commitment to safeguarding Veteran information and VA data within a complex environment. It establishes the strategic direction for managing risk and is the next phase in improving VA's security posture. VA's RMF positions VA to take a proactive approach to mitigating IT security risk and drives alignment with federal statutory and regulatory priorities to protect Veteran information.

Our strategy establishes an ambitious and carefully-crafted approach to cybersecurity and privacy protections. This approach helps VA to execute its mission to provide quality health care, benefits, and services to Veterans while fulfilling our responsibility to keep Veteran information and VA data safe and secure.

SECURING VA'S IT INFRASTRUCTURE

As of December 2017, we:



MEDICAL DEVICES

Secured 92 percent of medical devices with vulnerabilities.



PIV ENFORCEMENT

Increased Personal Identity Verification (PIV) enforcement from 11 percent in 2015 to 99.8 percent, exceeding the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) target for VA.



TWO-FACTOR AUTHENTICATION

Achieved 100 percent enforcement of two-factor authentication for privileged users.



SOFTWARE

Reduced use of unadjudicated software by 94 percent since January 2016.



MALWARE

Blocked 5.1 billion malware attempts since 2015, including WannaCry and Petya, two of 2017's high-profile, worldwide ransomware events.




EMAIL

Monitored more than 45 million emails daily in 2017 and blocked 75 billion malware attempts on VA systems.

ENTERPRISE RISK IDENTIFICATION SURVEY KEY PORTAL IS NOW LIVE

Leveraging OIT's Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) Framework, the Risk Management Division (RMD) developed the Enterprise Risk Identification Survey Key Portal (E-RISK). E-RISK helps field employees understand how to report potential risks to the OIT enterprise, fosters proactive risk management, and emphasizes the importance of shared ownership, responsibility, and teamwork when identifying and reporting enterprise risks.



Office of Information and Technology

Quality, Privacy, and Risk

Risk Management Division (RMD)

Enterprise Risk Identification Submission Key (E-RISK) Form

Employment Category	Your VA ID	Your Phone
Employee <input type="radio"/> Contractor <input type="radio"/> vhaisaphillr1		<input type="text"/>
Your Organization	Area Impacted by RISK	
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Risk Category		
<input type="text"/>		
Risk Description (who, what, when and why) <i>Field will expand with length of description.</i>		
<input type="text"/>		
Attach any supporting documentation		
<input type="button" value="Click here to attach a file"/>		
<input type="button" value="Submit"/>		

INSTITUTIONALIZING NEW CAPABILITIES THAT DRIVE IMPROVED OUTCOMES

VA needs to deliver cutting-edge technology solutions if we want to keep up with emerging technology and evolving Veteran needs.

In 2017, we focused on investing in new capabilities for a modern VA by leveraging cloud and digital platforms while incorporating other modern and innovative technology, such as expanded telehealth, mobile devices, and digital services to increase access, engagement, and interoperability at VA.

Community Care

Community Care is a nationwide program that utilizes partnerships with the private sector, academia, and government entities to provide eligible Veterans access to care. OIT worked closely with VHA to identify operational efficiencies and innovative, scalable technology solutions, including:

- » Secure email technology that provides an efficient mechanism for VA staff to share Veterans' protected health information with community providers
- » A health information sharing system that allows community providers to securely view Veteran health information
- » A referral documentation tool that automatically converts Veterans' paper medical records into a PDF format that can be directly uploaded to a Community Care provider's system

GetWellNetwork

GetWellNetwork is a platform that enables Veterans to manage their care and access resources. In 2017, OIT worked with VHA to enhance GetWellNetwork capabilities by integrating functionality with VA's electronic health record, VistA.

Now, important Veteran patient data—such as health education, goals, and preferences—can be accessed using GetWellNetwork and VistA.

Before this effort, a company like GetWellNetwork could collect Veteran health data, but could not analyze it in a meaningful way. Collaboration between OIT and VHA created a way to accurately and securely integrate Veteran-generated information from GetWellNetwork into VA's own VistA system.



Community Care IT Projects

*Highlights of our 2017
Community Care Program
IT projects.*



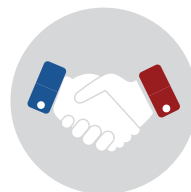
Community Care Program—Project Highlights



In FY16, Veterans scheduled 25.5 million community care appointments—an 18 percent increase from FY15.



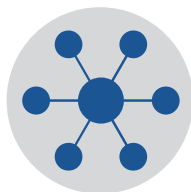
In FY16, VA processed nearly 18.9 million claims via all programs—a 13 percent increase since FY15.



At the end of FY17, VA eHealth Exchange had a total of 121 Community Care partners, including 992 hospitals and 29,864 ambulatory sites.



At the end of FY17, VA Direct Messaging had a total of 454 Community Care providers (hospitals or health centers), exceeding the FY17 goal of 200.



In FY15, the Choice Program network contracted approximately 200,000 providers and facilities. In FY17, the Choice Program network contracted more than 400,000 providers and facilities.

Nine VA medical centers currently use GetWellNetwork, but by the end of FY18, GetWellNetwork will expand to support 32 VA medical centers. Additional facilities are considering GetWellNetwork, potentially expanding its use to emergency rooms, community living centers, and other areas within VA medical centers.

Virtru Pro

OIT partnered with VHA to identify a solution to an issue that had been plaguing health and benefits providers for years: sharing Veteran data securely with outside providers and private sector partners. Together, they identified Virtru Pro, an email application that allows encrypted communication between VA and community providers through an internet-based (cloud) service without the need for non-VA recipients to acquire additional software licenses.

Virtru Pro deployed in May 2017 to VHA's Homeless Program Office (HPO) and Office of Community Care (OCC) with approximately 5,000 initial VA staff licenses and plans to deploy an additional 10,000 licenses.



Before Virtru Pro, OCC and HPO faced obstacles to electronically share critical Veteran information quickly and safely with community providers. They were unable to share Veteran protected health information (PHI) and personally identifiable information (PII) through email while remaining compliant with federal privacy law.

With Virtru Pro, users can securely send information to VA community partners and providers and move away from an inherently insecure and inefficient fax-based method of communication.

Referral Documentation (REFDOC)

Clinicians noted challenges with sharing documents across systems in the community and VA that led to delayed medical service to Veterans. As an extension to the work OIT and VHA did to help providers share data securely among different systems, the REFDOC project implemented a web application that allows VA staff to quickly pull individual Veteran patient information from VistA and the Corporate Data Warehouse into a PDF file to share with community providers for care coordination.

OIT deployed REFDOC at 122 sites nationwide. When combined with Virtru Pro, VA staff eliminated the time-consuming tasks of scanning, faxing, and mailing patient records to community providers, increasing the timeliness of Veteran access to services. So far, REFDOC has:

- » 1,335 active users who have created more than 818,837 packages since inception
- » Avoided costs of approximately \$8.3 million
- » Improved timeliness of medical record transfers to third parties by reducing the average processing time by 10 minutes per package

Recovery Engagement and Coordination for Health—Veterans Enhanced Treatment (REACH VET)

In April 2017, OIT and VHA launched REACH VET, a program that uses a new predictive model to analyze existing data from Veterans' health records to identify those at risk for adverse outcomes like suicide.

Recognizing the potential of REACH VET to enhance the White House VA Hotline and Veterans Crisis Line functionality, VHA and OIT partnered to provide White House VA Hotline agents, Veterans Crisis Line staff, and VA primary care and mental health providers access to REACH VET via their computers.

Once a Veteran is identified, their VA mental health or primary care provider can contact the Veteran to check on their well-being and review their condition(s) and treatment plans to determine if enhanced care is needed.

“ONE VETERAN SUICIDE IS ONE TOO MANY. THIS CUTTING-EDGE PROGRAM IS SAVING LIVES BY IDENTIFYING AT-RISK VETERANS AND CONNECTING THEM WITH THE SPECIALIZED CARE AND SUPPORT THEY NEED.”

– Secretary Shulkin

By engaging at-risk Veterans early, REACH VET reduces the frequency of adverse outcomes and allows VA to provide preemptive care and support for Veterans, in some cases before a Veteran even has suicidal thoughts. With the help of REACH VET and the VA Hotline, VHA and OIT are taking further steps to support and improve the quality of care for our nation's Veterans.

PREVENTING VETERAN SUICIDE



Scan the QR code or go to <https://go.usa.gov/xnwPh> to learn more about how IT supports VA's efforts to prevent Veteran suicide.

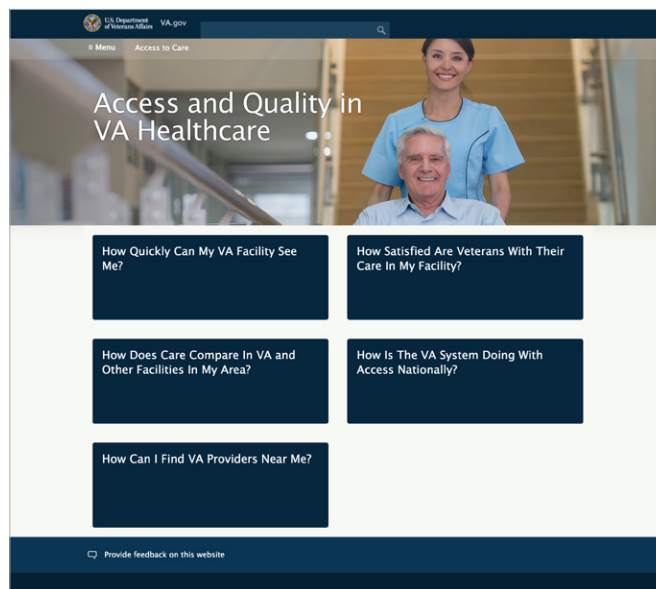
Access to Care

In April 2017, VA launched the [Access to Care site](#), a cloud-based, customer-facing website that enables Veterans to view wait times at VA facilities, compare care ratings, and review national data on care access. The website represents VA's commitment to being transparent and accountable in a way that Veterans can easily access and understand. Ultimately, the website gives Veterans the power to make a more informed decision about their VA health care.

The access and quality tool provides Veterans and their families with information they need to manage their health care interactions. Available information includes:

- » New and established patient wait times
- » Satisfaction scores for access to primary and specialty care
- » Timeliness of urgent appointments
- » Information about the quality of health care delivered at every medical center compared to local, private-sector hospitals

This project demonstrates VA's commitment to improving timeliness of care, changing the culture within the agency, being transparent with the Veteran community, and empowering Veterans to make informed decisions about their health care. Not only does this tool process complex data, but it makes the data transparent to Veterans and the public. We will continue to improve transparency via the Access to Care site as we receive feedback from Veterans, employees, Veterans Service Organizations, and Congress. Incorporating this feedback will ensure that the Veteran access and quality tool is a Veteran-driven point of access for the level of care our Veterans deserve.



BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE SERVICE LINE

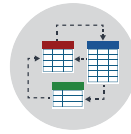
OIT's Business Intelligence Service Line (BISL) accepted the challenge of launching the new Access to Care site within 30 days and assembled a talented team that worked around the clock to break new ground and launch a Veteran-facing, cloud-based application. Pre-launch activities included briefings to Veterans Service Organizations, the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee, the House Veterans Affairs Committee, and multiple news outlets including *USA Today* and *60 Minutes*. Since the launch of Access to Care on April 12, 2017, OIT has made approximately 750 modifications and additions to the site, including six major releases—many at the request of the Secretary, reflecting his personal involvement in the project and OIT's commitment to delivering on VA's promise to be more transparent.

VA's work was recognized government- and industry-wide; the application was named a finalist in the 2017 *Government Computer News* digIT Awards.

EHRM



Promotes patient safety and interoperability for the duration of a patient's active duty service and time in the care of VA

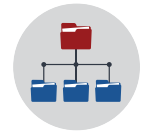


Provides Veterans with a single, accurate lifetime health record

Enables VA to keep pace with the improvements in health information technology and cybersecurity



Supports the critical need for VA to share patient data with DoD and community partners



Electronic Health Record Modernization (EHRM)

VA and the Department of Defense (DoD) share more medical information than any two health care organizations in the country. Having an EHR that can follow our Veterans during their treatment is one of the most important things we can do to ensure their safety, health, and general well-being.

VA and DoD have been working together for more than 17 years on these challenges. While we have established initial interoperability between VA and DoD for key aspects of the health record, seamless care is fundamentally constrained by a complex environment.

On June 5, 2017, Secretary Shulkin addressed this 17-year challenge to modernize and merge disparate systems and health records when [he announced his decision to adopt](#)

[the same EHR system as DoD](#). The adoption of the same system between VA and DoD will facilitate a seamless link between the Departments. Veterans will have a single lifetime record from the time they begin military service. Veterans won't bear the burden of tracking down their records and maintaining copies to bring to their providers.

Establishing a complete and accurate health record in a single common system is critical to achieving the highest quality of care and patient safety. EHRM will enable VA to keep pace with rapidly evolving improvements in health information technology and cybersecurity.

Beyond managing the electronic health record, EHRM enhances scheduling resources that are critical to Veterans' access to the care they need, when they need it.

Joint Legacy Viewer (JLV) and Community Viewer (CV)

As an interim data sharing solution while we work on a seamless EHR, OIT and VHA worked with DoD to develop and deploy JLV, a user interface that provides clinicians with an intuitive display of DoD and VA health care data on a single screen. JLV is now available to clinicians in every VA facility.

We also worked with VHA to build on JLV's success, and [in 2017 developed CV](#) so VA providers could share health data with external community care providers not currently engaged in secure, electronic information exchange with VA. Both JLV and CV are read-only, web-based applications that support benefits delivery and clinical decisions that are essential to providing coordinated, secure, and streamlined health care and benefits. Together, JLV and CV improve access to safe, high-quality care for Veterans through an integrated view of health data from multiple sources.

Vets.gov

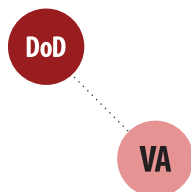
In 2017, we worked with our Digital Service team to design a single, effortless digital experience for Veterans by reducing the number of digital touch points and enhancing [Vets.gov](#).

Vets.gov planned enhancements reflect a shift in the way Veterans and their family members interact with VA sites by making it easier to find and use information and tools. Our goals for the new site are:

- » Unifying and simplifying VA's digital touch points, dramatically improving customer experience
- » Meeting customer needs on the first try, on any device
- » Creating a mobile-first platform
- » Retooling existing applications and designing new end-to-end experiences in partnership with business owners across VA
- » Providing transparency about our methods and processes

JLV AND CV BY THE NUMBERS

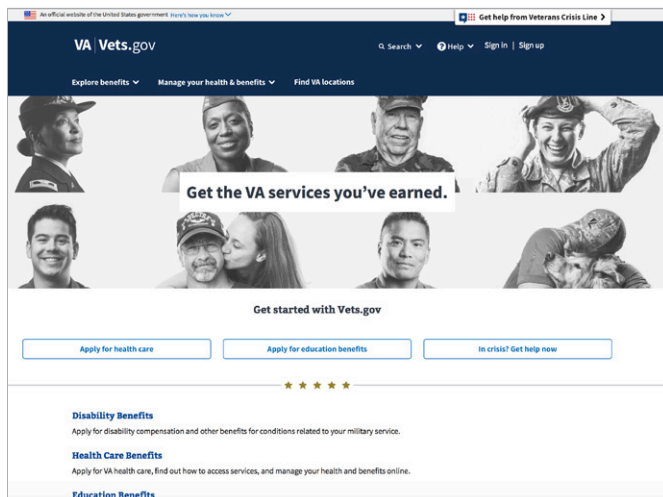
As of November 2017, VA reported **89,623** JLV DoD and **332,586** VA users



Between May 2013 and October 2017, almost **eight million** medical records were viewed through JLV

CV was nationally released in November 2017 with **94** active providers

A screenshot of a login form. It features a text input field for a URL starting with 'http://'. Below this are two input fields labeled 'USER NAME' and 'PASSWORD', each followed by a red button. At the bottom is a larger red button labeled 'SIGN IN'.



We worked with our business partners across the Department to enhance current Vets.gov functionality and make it even easier for Veterans to apply for benefits and health care and comprehensively manage the services they need from VA.

Together with the VA Health Eligibility Center, we introduced a new digital application Veterans can use to apply for VA health care. Previously, fewer than 10 percent of applicants used the Veterans Online Application for a simple reason: the form would not open for most users. The application was an editable PDF that required Veterans to use Adobe Acrobat 8 or 9 via Internet Explorer. More than 70 percent of U.S. Government traffic comes from Chrome, Safari, or Firefox, meaning that more than 70 percent of visitors would have trouble accessing the health care application.

We improved our back-end process for developing and publishing online forms. What used to take our team five months to build now takes just five days, allowing VA to quickly respond to user needs and roll out new functionality to Vets.gov and Veterans.

We also partnered with NCA to integrate a variety of new services into their website to consolidate Veteran-facing features and self-service, including:

- » Access to additional memorial benefits
- » A newly revised pre-need memorial benefits eligibility PDF form
- » An upgraded Eligibility Office Automation System

MyHealtheVet

My HealtheVet directly serves Veterans by providing a web portal through which Veterans can communicate with their doctors, refill prescriptions, and manage their own health records. EPMO employees update and maintain this portal diligently; in the last fiscal year, employees scoured all 600-plus pages of the site to update and validate information. A team of employees also worked to provide MyHealtheVet users the ability to switch between the VA Mobile Framework and MyHealtheVet using their MyHealtheVet credentials. MyHealtheVet remains the most visited VA website and accounts for approximately 40 percent of traffic to VA-related sites.

In December 2017, we released VA Medical Images and Reports Health Records, which allows users to access more of their health information. Several other upgrades will be deployed in 2018.

Faster Care for Veterans Act of 2016

In accordance with the Faster Care for Veterans Act of 2016, VA met aggressive acquisition milestones and piloted a commercial off-the-shelf patient self-scheduling appointment system, accessible through the devices Veterans use today, such as their smartphones.

VA implemented three pilot sites in December 2017 to determine the impact of the Veterans Self-scheduling System—primarily its ability to improve Veteran access and timeliness of services.

VistA Scheduling Enhancements (VSE)

VSE provides users with a resource management dashboard, an aggregated clinical schedule, and a single queue of request lists. This functionality enhances VA's ability to use provider resources, reduce no-shows, limit the loss of information, and provide critical administrative support to Veterans. Veterans see an improvement in coordination of care that meets their needs for multiple appointments more efficiently. As of September 2017, VSE is deployed at 158 sites.

“VA IS MAKING CRITICAL IMPROVEMENTS TO VETERAN HEALTH CARE, AND WILL ALWAYS LOOK TO LEVERAGE INNOVATIVE TOOLS THAT WILL PUT MORE CAPABILITIES IN THE HANDS OF VETERANS. SELF-SCHEDULING APPS ARE WIDELY USED IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND WILL HELP CREATE A BETTER EXPERIENCE FOR VETERANS AND THEIR MEDICAL-CARE PROVIDERS.”

– Secretary Shulkin

Lighthouse

Last year, we embarked on a journey to find a way to deliver the type of health technology experience our Veterans were getting from our private sector counterparts, but on a VA platform that was built to accommodate our Veterans' unique needs. We identified industry best practices and existing architecture that could be configured to fit into VA's IT framework. And then we got to work.

By working from the outside in, we built requirements based on real Veterans. We put the Veteran first and developed a proof of concept to see if this technology could work not just for our Veterans, but for VA.

And it did.

Leveraging a model of public-private partnerships, we completed a proof of concept for the Digital Health Platform—now called Lighthouse—that marks an entirely new approach to health care and beyond.

WHAT IS AN API?

Think of an API as a server in a restaurant. Imagine you are sitting at a table with a menu of choices to order from, and the kitchen is the part of the system that will prepare the order. What's missing is the critical link to communicate your order to the kitchen and deliver your food back to your table. That's where the server—or API—comes in.

The server is the messenger that takes your order or request and tells the system—in this case, the kitchen—what to do. Then the API (or server) delivers the response back to you (brings you your food).

Lighthouse connects data from different sources using an open-source Application Programming Interface (API) Gateway platform on a private VA cloud. This architecture enables external app developers to build apps—both mobile and web—on a standard set of APIs that we developed to serve our Veterans’ needs. This in turn allows VA to make changes to our underlying systems, get rid of old databases, and make necessary upgrades, without disrupting the user experience.

When completed, Veterans will be able to manage their own health experience with a platform that is innovative, interoperable, streamlined, and secure. They will be able to:

- » Schedule appointments, view medical records, and manage their care plans
- » Video conference with doctors and contact their entire care team
- » Manage medications and refill prescriptions
- » Aggregate and use data from the smartphone/ smartwatch apps they already use
- » Connect to non-VA community health care providers in real time



Lighthouse is a radical departure from how people imagine a government bureaucracy works. Lighthouse will enable Veterans to take control of their health in ways that are both convenient and accessible. They will enjoy a real-time, comprehensive view of their health care that is available with a simple tap on their smartphones. Leveraging best-in-class commercial innovation to achieve a seamless patient and provider experience, Lighthouse is proof that VA can and will continually evolve to meet—and even anticipate—Veterans’ needs.

Telehealth

VA is also improving care for Veterans by expanding its telehealth capabilities. VA launched the National Telestroke Program (NTSP) to provide acute stroke telehealth treatment at facilities that lack constant acute stroke coverage. Located throughout the country, a group of VA stroke neurologists are responsible for providing continuous telestroke coverage in facilities participating in NTSP.

In 2016, 9,000 Veterans were treated for an acute ischemic stroke at VA facilities, 30 percent of whom resided in rural areas. As of 2017, OIT has deployed NTSP at 10 facilities across the country and trained 97 employees to use the program to treat Veterans with suspected acute stroke.

Audiology Workstation Project

IT Operations and Services (ITOPS) partnered with VHA's Audiology and Speech Pathology program offices, Healthcare Technology Management, and other OIT divisions to help make VA's 3-year Audiology Workstation project a success. The Audiology Workstation project is an initiative to modernize and standardize approximately 2,400 audiology workstations across the Department to ensure the most comprehensive and high-quality aural health care for Veterans. Its mission focuses on creating a more consistent and efficient user experience for health care providers and their patients. The modernized workstations have already supported more than 2.1 million clinical encounters in 2017, benefiting nearly one million Veterans.

Benefits Delivery Network

VA processes more than 12 million benefit transactions every month and distributes billions of dollars in Veteran entitlements every year. The Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA)'s primary database and payment system, Benefits Delivery Network (BDN), is more than 50 years old and poses significant risks to VA's ability to provide the benefits Veterans need in a secure and timely manner.

In 2017, OIT partnered with VBA to develop a decommissioning roadmap to migrate functions to more modern and advanced systems while allowing the current

system to continue to function and process benefits. The plan decouples each BDN component from the existing network so that individual components can receive maintenance or upgrades without shutting down the entire system. Once decoupled, components will be transferred to a modernized system. For example, compensation and burials will be transferred to the Veterans Benefits Management System (VBMS), and pensions will be transferred to the Financial and Accounting System (FAS). At the end of FY18, all non-education capabilities will have transitioned from BDN to a more efficient and cost-effective managed services function.

Modernizing the BDN will ensure that VBA-wide financial payment and processing remains feasible and Veterans continue to receive the benefits they have earned.

Caseflow

OIT partnered with VBA to develop a new suite of tools, Caseflow, to modernize the Veterans' benefits appeals process.

Caseflow replaces the 1980s-era Veterans Appeals Control and Locator System (VACOLS), which VA designed to handle paper-based appeals. VA designed Caseflow with an eye toward meeting the requirements of the 2017 [Appeals Modernization Act](#), which provides new options for Veterans seeking review of an original claim determination.

In the coming months, Caseflow will replace VACOLS in stages. As OIT installs new Caseflow functions, we will turn off corresponding functions in VACOLS. Once this process is complete, Caseflow will handle all aspects of the appeals process.

A BETTER BENEFITS EXPERIENCE



Scan the QR code or go to <https://go.usa.gov/xnwE3> to learn how IT helped VBA deliver a better Veteran experience.

The Caseflow system includes multiple applications, each of which helps VA employees manage different aspects of an appeal. Caseflow Intake, for example, integrates with the VBMS to receive and track all review requests under the Appeals Modernization Act. Caseflow Reader retrieves documents from VBMS in an interface designed to meet the needs of board attorneys and judges. Caseflow's eFolder Express enables a one-click download of a Veteran's eFolder, which will help facilitate and accelerate appeals processing.

Memorial Cemetery Management Modernization Phase 1 (CM1) Project

The Memorial Cemetery Management Modernization project supports our most sacred responsibility: to honor our deceased Veterans with the dignity owed by their ultimate sacrifice, as well as to provide Veteran families peace of mind.

The Memorial Cemetery Management Modernization Phase 1 (CM1) project will enable NCA to review, update, and validate Veteran case data in near real time, providing burial and memorial benefits information via NCA websites and mobile applications. In 2017, we configured a commercial off-the-shelf product to standardize and

automate interment workflows and track the cemetery interment process to its completion. We now have the ability to upload a [geographic database of cemeteries](#) and [see maps of gravesites](#) for the interment process.

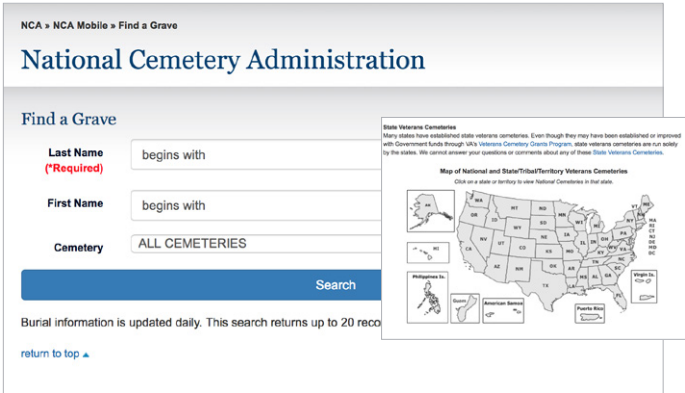
IT Workforce Development

As we invested in new capabilities and innovative technologies, we remained focused on investing in our people. In 2017, OIT worked hand-in-hand with our employees to develop competency models and trainings to ensure employees had the opportunity to develop skills needed to support a modern VA.

In 2017, ITWD delivered:

- » More than 300 custom courses
- » 28 competency models
- » 127 live campus trainings
- » On-demand trainings watched by 25,959 people
- » 95,163 unique instances of training
- » 92 percent average effectiveness rating
- » Live trainings with 20,973 participants
- » 78 IT certifications

In 2017, OIT worked diligently to overcome barriers to innovation, asking, "Why not?" and "What if?" These initiatives demonstrate VA's commitment to modernizing systems, focusing resources, and improving timeliness of services.



HONORING OUR VETERANS

Memorial Day observance in West Virginia National Cemetery.





PART THREE

OUR PATH FORWARD

OIT did not make this progress in a vacuum. This year, we worked closely with our partners across the Department to deepen our understanding of Veteran needs, giving our talent, our time, and our resources to address the most pressing issues.

But this is just the beginning.

As VA strives to become our Veterans' provider of choice, OIT is committed to providing the technological backbone that enables our colleagues to improve the care, benefits, and services our Veterans have earned.

As the largest civilian federal agency, VA should be the pinnacle of transparency, accountability, innovation, and

“VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES DESERVE THE VERY BEST CARE AND SERVICES AVAILABLE. WE WANT THEM TO CHOOSE VA NOT BECAUSE THEY HAVE NO OTHER CHOICE, BUT BECAUSE WE ARE THE BEST AT WHAT WE DO, HOW WE DO IT, AND BECAUSE OF THE DIFFERENCE WE MAKE IN THE LIVES OF VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES.”

– Secretary Shulkin

teamwork. We want to be the premier example of how government should reward the investment of the taxpayer, enlist the trust and support of our oversight partners, and honor the sacrifice of those who serve. Building on the success of past initiatives such as MyVA helped us transform into a better business partner and guided the creation of VA's ChooseVA initiative.

In 2017, [Secretary Shulkin outlined five priorities](#) that support a fundamental shift in how VA does business, modernizing our Department so that all Veterans choose us not because they're limited by options, but because we do it better than anyone else.



- » Becoming a Greater Choice for Veterans
- » Working to Modernize Our Systems
- » Focusing Our Resources More Efficiently
- » Improving Timeliness of Services
- » Getting to Zero with Suicide Prevention

Technology underpins all five priorities, which is why we mapped OIT's goals and priorities to the overarching federal and VA modernization strategies and developed a [Comprehensive IT Plan](#) to guide our modernization success through 2018 and beyond.

“ TO CARE FOR HIM WHO SHALL HAVE BORNE THE BATTLE AND FOR HIS WIDOW, AND HIS ORPHAN.”

– President Abraham Lincoln

Modernizing our systems will create efficiencies that free up resources and funding that can be reinvested in programs that directly benefit the Veterans we serve. As we enter 2018, OIT is focused on five modernization priorities:



- » Managing Data
- » Migrating to the Cloud
- » Improving Cybersecurity
- » Digitizing Business Processes
- » Decommissioning Legacy Systems

Through [our transformation](#) in 2016 and modernization in 2017, OIT has restructured into an organization that mirrors world-class IT peers who leverage shared systems, modern IT governance, and open data to deliver robust, data-driven, and efficient services. This coming year, OIT will continue to pursue our enduring goals of stabilizing and streamlining core processes and platforms, eliminating material weaknesses, and institutionalizing new capabilities that drive improved outcomes.

IT modernization in 2018 will build on that foundation to focus on innovating how we work to deliver intuitive and cost-effective technology solutions, and to support VA's sacred mission: "To care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow, and his orphan."

WE WILL **BE TRANSPARENT**, BOTH IN OUR
SUCCESSIONS AND IN OUR FAILURES.

.....

WE WILL SET BOLD, VETERAN-CENTRIC GOALS
AND **HOLD OURSELVES ACCOUNTABLE**.

.....

WE WILL CREATE AN **INNOVATIVE ENVIRONMENT**
IN WHICH VETERANS *CHOOSE VA*.

.....

WE WILL FORGE TRUE PARTNERSHIPS AND
WORK AS A TEAM THROUGHOUT VA.

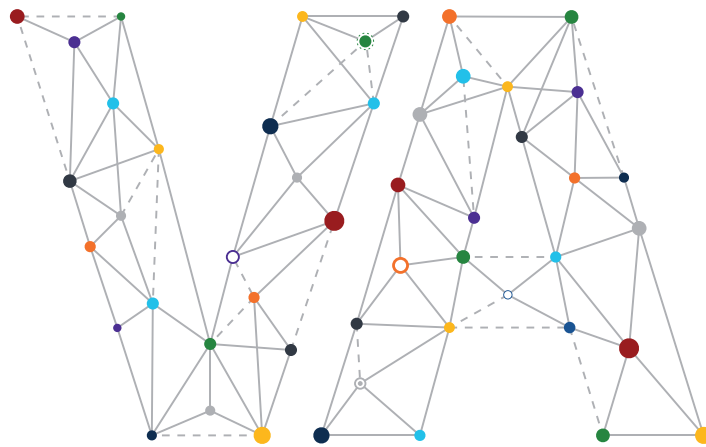


Our Commitment
for 2018

FUTURE OF MODERNIZATION



Scan the QR code or go to <https://go.usa.gov/xnwPS> to learn more about what OIT has in store for the future of modernization at VA.



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